

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 184 330

FL 011 060

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 TITLE Correspondencia (Correspondence).
 INSTITUTION Arkansas State Dept. of Education, Little Rock.
 SPONS AGENCY Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
 PUB DATE Aug 79
 NOTE 27p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
 DESCRIPTORS Bilingual Education; Creative Writing; Instructional Materials; Language Skills; *Letters (Correspondence); *Minicourses; *Native Language Instruction; Secondary Education; Second Language Instruction; Second Language Learning; *Spanish; *Teacher Developed Materials; Vocabulary Development; Writing (Composition); Writing Exercises; *Writing Instruction; Writing Skills

IDENTIFIERS Bilingual Education Act 1968; Elementary Secondary Education Act Title VI

ABSTRACT

The language of Spanish correspondence possesses particular characteristics that lie somewhere between the everyday conversational style and the more formal literary style. This minicourse contains three lessons intended to enable the student to learn the letter-writing style and to write letters in Spanish. It is also intended to encourage and develop interest in Spanish. There are three lessons in the mini-course dealing with the following topics: (1) terminology; (2) letter elements and their placement in the letter; and (3) types of letters such as business, personal, and miscellaneous, with emphasis on the personal correspondence. A filmstrip with reel to reel tape is available to accompany the lessons. (Author/AMH)

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ED184330

CORRESPONDENCIA

Published by the
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
STATE OF ARKANSAS

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FL 011 060

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special acknowledgment is given to Robert Brannan who prepared the contents of CORRESPONDENCIA.

The preparation of CORRESPONDENCIA was made possible by ESEA Title IV funds. The cost of the publication was defrayed by ESEA, Title IV, Part C funds, P. L. 93-380.

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CORRESPONDENCIA

I. UNIT TOPICS: (Level) Adaptable

- A. The target language as used in correspondence
- B. Types of correspondence

II. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- A. Allow the student to effectively communicate in the target language as actually used in everyday situations.
- B. Give the student a greater insight and greater appreciation of a practical use of the target language.
- C. Vocabulary improvement and expansion.

III. TEACHER PREPARATION AND SPECIAL FACILITIES NEEDED:

- A. Familiarization with letter forms, correct greetings, closings, etc.
- B. Knowledge of the various forms and the various business terms used regularly by the corresponding parties.

IV. OUTLINE OF CONTENT

- A. Correct terminology
 - 1. Unnecessary words
 - 2. Incorrect phrases
- B. Letter elements
 - 1. Date
 - 2. Name and address
 - 3. Greeting
 - 4. Body
 - 5. Farewell
- C. Kinds of Letters
 - 1. Friendly
 - 2. Business
 - 3. Miscellaneous

V. ACTIVITIES:

- A. Establish "pen-pals" in the country of the target language
- B. Letter writing and letter writing contests
- C. Visitation of a factory, mill, or business which receives letters in the foreign language to see how these are dealt with.

CORRESPONDENCIA

AN INTRODUCTORY MINICOURSE IN SPANISH CORRESPONDENCE

No one speaks exactly as he writes nor does he write exactly as he speaks. A person's working vocabulary is vastly different from his writing vocabulary, which is usually held in the mind's reservoir until needed.

Nowhere is the style of writing and speaking so sharply contrasted as in the Spanish letter, especially the business letter. Personal letters also have a flavor of their own. The terminology and the style of the letter are extremely important to the Spanish letter writer who is concerned with correctness and who does not want to offend the receiver of his message.

The Spanish correspondence possesses characteristics all its own and uses what Jose M. Ripolles, in his book, Correspondencia Familiar, terms "el lenguaje epistolar". This is the language somewhere between the everyday conversational style and the more formal literary style.

One may tend to believe that writing a letter of this type is difficult, but on the contrary, if one adheres to the rules, advice, and terminology presented in this minicourse the result should be well written letters, which will be enjoyable to write and, at the same time, make a good impression on the receiving end.

Lesson One will deal with the terminology. This particular lesson will serve as a springboard for expansion of vocabulary and can be useful in teaching idioms.

Lesson Two deals with the letter elements and their placement in the letter.

Lesson Three concerns itself with the types of letters, such as business, personal, and miscellaneous.

Since the primary aim of these minicourses is to encourage and develop interest in the target language preferably on the Junior High level, and since this minicourse may be used by students who will write personal letters more so than business correspondence, this particular unit will be written from that viewpoint.

There is a filmstrip with reel to reel tape available, "La Oficina." To obtain the filmstrip on a loan basis write to: Robert Brannon, Chairman, Foreign Language Department, Stuttgart High School, 22nd and Buerkle, Stuttgart, Arkansas, 72160.

LESSON ONE

TERMINOLOGY

To learn to write effectively and acquire a feeling for correct terminology, a few suggestions will be given for the person who wishes to continue studying and writing:

1. Read the better authors and copy certain passages from their works.
2. Think about what is to be stated in the letter before beginning.
3. Select the proper terms to be used in the text of the letter.
4. Proofread and correct the rough draft of the letter several hours after writing it. Mistakes can always be found.
5. Write the final draft using definitive diction.

When writing try to avoid repetition of words in a sentence or adjoining sentences. For example, do not overuse "que" or "pues" or "puesto que" or any such similar words which seem to abound and multiply.

Put commas in the proper places and never abuse them. Commas indicate pauses or "breathing places" in a sentence. Remember, used in over abundance, commas can easily tire the reader and at times even change the meaning of an entire sentence.

Study the following list of repetitious phrases and the suggested corrections. Many others may be found in regular class experiences which may be added.

"muy infimo"-----"infimo" itself suggests smallness and the word "muy" therefore is unnecessary.

"recomenzó de nuevo"-----"de nuevo" is not needed because "recomenzar" indicates "to start again".

"pues en efecto"-----"pues" and "en efecto" should always be used separately.

"su carta de usted"-----say only "su carta" or "la carta de usted"

- "como por ejemplo"-----do not use together or "asi por ejemplo" together. "Como" and "asi" repeat the idea already included in "por ejemplo." It is better to simply write "como..." or "si" or "por ejemplo".
- "ganar una victoria"-----"ganar" is to obtain a victory. It is better to say "Alcanzar una victoria."
- "en fin, brevemente"-----say "en fin" or "brevemente". Both words have the same meaning.
- "Pintar a la perfección"-----It is much better to use "pintar con perfección."
- "Las leyes lo sancionan"-----Use "Lo penan."
- "volar por el aire"-----It will suffice to say simply "volar". It is generally understood that when one flies, it is "por el aire".
- Es por eso que"-----It is considered much more correct to say "Es a causa de eso que."
- "Me ocupo de..."-----More acceptable to say "Cuido de..."
- "bajo este punto de vista"-----It is better to write "desde este punto de vista"
- "más aquí, más allí, tan acá, tan allá"-----Instead of these, say "más acá, más allá, tan aquí, tan allá, etc."
- "me hizo esa bondad"-----"me hizo esta gracia" is more acceptable.
- "Estaba previsto de antemano"-----"Estaba previsto" is much better.
- "Me ocupo de"-----"Me ocupo en..." is better.
- "Nadie de nosotros..."-----Generally it is more acceptable to use "Ninguno de nosotros."
- "Esto es un hecho aparte"-----"Esto es otra cosa" is much better.
- "Lapso de tiempo"-----"lapso" is more compact and means the same thing.
- "declino el honor"-----Instead of declining the honor, "renuncio el honor"
- "llegar a la misma hora"-----It's better to "llegar a una misma hora"

All Spanish letters use certain abbreviations which smack of mystery and wonderment to the English reader. Following is a list from actual businesses that have made use of business letters written in Spanish and from the book, Correspondencia Familiar, which may help to clear up the confusion concerning these "secret symbols".

affmo., affma.	afectísimo, afectísima
art.	artículo
attto., atta.	atento, atenta
B.	Banco
dupdo., dupda.	duplicado, duplicada
cía., C. ^o	compañía
Cta., Cte., c/c	cuenta, corriente
P. D.	posdata
P. O.	por orden
q. b. s. m.	que besa sus manos
q. l. b. l. m.	que le beso la mano
Pbro.	Presbitero
Rvdo. Sr.	Reverendo Señor
Sr. D.	Señor Don
Sra. Dña.	Señora Doña
Rtble. Sr., Rtble, Sra.	Respetable Señor, Respetable Señora
S. S. S.	Su Seguro Servidor
v. g. or v. gr.	verbi gracia
q. s. m. e.	que su mano estrecha
E. P. D.	En paz descanse.
Excmo. Sr.	Excelentísimo Señor
Ilmo. Sr.	Ilustrísimo Señor

V. E. I.-----Vuestra Excelencia Ilustrísima
 p. pdo.-----próximo pasado
 num or N^o-----número
 Vdo. or Vda.-----Viudo or Viuda
 Admon.-----administración
 Iltre. Sr.-----Ilustre Señor

The "tratamientos" are extremely important also. "Tratamientos" are the titles given to persons of nobility or who have a high station in life. These are very offended if their proper title is not used. Following is a list of abbreviations which are used for the indicated position.

Jefe del estado-----S. E.
 Ministros-----V. E.
 Directores generales-----V. I.
 Arzobispos-----V. E.
 Obispos-----S. S. I.
 Gobernadores Civiles-----V. E.
 Jueces-----V. S.
 Magistrados-----Ilmo.
 Presidentes de Audiencia-----V. E.

Other Abbreviations Commonly Used

ant.	-----	anterior
d.	-----	días
d/f	-----	días fecha
efvo.	-----	efectivo
E./a neg	-----	efectos a negociar
fcha.	-----	fecha
fic.	-----	ferro charril
g.v.	-----	gran velocidad
gtos. com	-----	gastos comerciales
m.	-----	meses
m/cgo.	-----	mi cargo
negn	-----	negociación
n/t.	-----	nuestro talón
o.	-----	orden
P/.	-----	pagaré
Ptas	-----	pesetas
%	-----	por ciento
p.o.	-----	por orden
p.p.	-----	por poderes
pte.	-----	presente
R.	-----	registrado
sdo	-----	saldo
S.A.	-----	Sociedad Anónima
s/fr	-----	su faror
s/a	-----	su aceptación

The months are often abbreviated:

Ene., Febr., Abr., Agto., Sbre., Octbre., Novbre., Dbre.

Marzo, Mayo, Junio, julio are usually left intact.

SALUDO

After the inside address a salutation such as, "muy señor mío" is written or one of the following can be substituted:

"Respetable señor"

"Distinguido señor"

"Muy respetable señor"

"Respetado señor mío"

The salutations depend on the friendship or acquaintance of the writer to the one being written. If the writer is a good friend he may use:

"Muy Sr. mío y amigo"

"Respetable Señora y distinguida amiga"

If one is writing to a family member, he may use:

"Queridos padres"

"Padres míos"

"Hijo mío"

If one is writing to a person who carries a special title, the following might be used:

"Reverendo señor"----priests

"Reverendo padre"

"Honorable Sr."----university professor, bishop, judge, etc.

"Señora, Señor"----Persons of aristocracy or of a title

REFERENCIA OR OPENING

This usually refers to prior business or states briefly the business under discussion in the present letter.

TEXTO

Do not be wordy or repetitious; be brief. Give clear facts and do not weigh down with useless information.

LESSON TWO

LETTER ELEMENTS

In letters one must be careful with the structure and placement of paragraphs, courtesy titles, greeting, and farewells, etc. If one is careless in this phase, the letter will be rather choppy, meaningless, and unpleasant to read as well as look at. To quote José M. Ripollés, "El arte de las letras, como la pintura y como la música es un don connatural de las inteligencias privilegiadas, y estos prodigios antes que requerir reglas, las crean."

A breakdown of a letter reveals it contains eight elements:

1. lugar y fecha
2. Nombre de la persona a la cual va dirigida, domicilio y población de residencia
3. Saludo o tratamiento
4. Referencia
5. Texto
6. Conclusiones
7. Despedida
8. Firma

LUGAR Y FECHA

Make certain the name of the town is clearly written and be sure the date is the date on which the letter is written.

Since all letters are written to someone who lives in such and such a place, the "nombre y dirección" should be written in a style such as

Sr. D. Ramón Castro
Calle del Caballí, 33, 2, 3.
Cuzco

CONCLUSIONES

After writing the body, write a short paragraph in which a request is stated, or a summary of what was discussed, bringing together in a few sentences the reason for the letter.

DESPEDIDA

For the farewell use phrases which are in direct relation to the friendship, respect, personality or rank and position of the person for whom the letter is intended.

If the letter is one in which a favor has been asked, express some hope it will be granted or if it has been a letter of complaint or protest, express confidence that wrongs will be redressed just before the "despedida".

MODELOS DE FINALES

"Despedidas" or "finales" are found in abundance in Spanish commercial correspondence. It is often difficult for the English-speaking reader to comprehend these sometimes lengthy overly polite endings. The terse, "Sincerely yours," or, "Truly yours" is often the best interpretation of the following examples:

Muy atentamente le saludamos y quedamos suyos affmos. S.S.

En espera de sus prontas noticias, quedamos de Vds. affmos. S.S.

Sin otro particular, le saluda respetuosamente su afectisimo...

Sin otro particular, saludan a Vd. muy atentamente y B.S.M.

Sin otro particular de momento nos es grato suscribirnos muy atentamente.

Sin mas de momento nos repetimos como siempre Attos. y Ss.Ss.

DISTRIBUCION DE LAS PARTES

LUGAR Y FECHA

Madrid, 6 mayo 1975*

NOMBRE Y DIRECCION

Sr. D. Carlos Pérez
Cazco 5, bajos
Lugo

SALUDO

Distinguido señor:

TEXTO

EL TEXTO

DESPEDIDA

Le quedaré muy agradecido por su atención y
dándole gracias anticipadamente se ofrece de Vd.
affmo. y s. s.

FIRMA

Pedro Gonzales de Amsco

*el 6 de mayo 1975 - this form generally used in Spain. In most other
parts of the Hispanic world Mayo 6 de 1975, or Mayo 6, 1975 will be used.

LESSON THREE

TYPES OF LETTERS

This lesson contains examples of the various types of letters; a personal letter, a letter concerning a death, telegrams, a friendship letter, and finally a business letter.

THE PERSONAL LETTER

Personal letters deal with almost everything one can think of from special interests to love, from stories to news, in other words, most personal letters contain "de todo un poco".

When writing a personal letter one should try to remember the likes and dislikes of the person being addressed. This often dictates the proper diction to use. One wants to please the person to whom he is writing and their pleasures should be the first concern when writing this type of letter. There is no room for errors. Don't limit the number of rough drafts before writing the final copy.

As one becomes more accustomed to writing letters, and writing in general, rough drafts become less necessary. It does take a considerable amount of practice before one reaches the point of mastery at writing.

THE PERSONAL LETTER

San Juan, 8 de abril de 1975

Sr. Don Miguel Cruz Hernandez
Planta 8
Avenida del Generalísimo, 39
Madrid - 16

Querido Miguel:

Se ha recibido tu carta con la relacion de asuntos que tienes entre manos y tus planes para el desarrollo de los mismos.

Me ha parecido acertado todo cuanto me comunicas. Sólo desee que emprendas tu labor con perseverancia y buen sentido. sin cuyas cualidades fracasarían tus proyectos irremisiblemente.

Celebro que tus aspiraciones se vean orientadas y alentadas c con la inteligencia que hasta shora demuestras y ruego a Dios que te conceda todo cuanto merezcas, en pago de tu actividad y de los santos principios que inspiran todos tus actos.

Recibe con este n o motivo, hijo mio, un beso muy fuerte de tu padre que te dendice y te felicita:

Roberto Hernández

CONDOLENCE LETTER

San Gariel, 2 de mayo de 1975

Sra. Carlota Luis
Punta del Norte, 9
San Juan

Querida Carlota:

Nos hemos enterado de la triste noticia del fallecimiento de Enrique, de cuya enfermedad apenas teníamos noticia, pues únicamente un vecino de esa nos tenía avisado que tu tío se hallaba algo enfermo pero sin ser nada de cuidado.

Puedes creer que la noticia nos ha afectado de veras y que hemos llevado profundamente el triste desenlace de la enfermedad sufrida. Nos hacemos cargo de tu pena y te enviamos el mas sentido pesame ya que no encontramos frases mas propias para expresarte nuestro dolor y llevarte el consuelo que necesitas.

Resignate cristianamente, querida prima, y recibe el afecto pariente que te profesan,

Roberto y Pilar María

TELEGRAMS

In wording telegrams it is necessary to use the most discretion in selecting words that will convey the message in the simplest and clearest way. Clarity is the most important because many deeply regrettable misunderstanding can result from a poorly worded telegram. Two examples of telegrams follow.

DOCUMENTOS ENVIADOS NO SIRVEN. REPETIR ENVIO LEGALIZADOS NOTARIO.
OPERACION FELIZ SIGUE CURSO CURACION SIN COMPLICACIONES

FRIENDSHIP LETTERS

These letters sometimes are very delicate and sometimes difficult to write. They require a certain amount of tact and wording of high quality since they help maintain or build up good relationships between people who like each other. They do not deal with intimate friendships but with friendships which are more superficial.

Try to write these letters in the tone that the friendship suggests, for example, if the friendship is based upon something spiritual, then the letter should concern itself with spiritual matters; if the friendship is based on sports, then the letter should concern itself with whatever sport the reader and the writer are most interested in.

FRIENDSHIP LETTER

Miami, 3 de marzo de 1975

Sra. Margarita Moreno
Planta 5
Havana

Respetable Señora y distinguida amiga:

Es muy grato para mí corresponder a su amable carta del día 9 de los corrientes, enviada desde Havana.

Celebro mucho que te resulte agradable su estancia en esa bella ciudad donde dice haber encontrado las impresiones mas placenteras de su vida.

Les deseo mucha suerte en todos conceptos y ojala que en sus futuras cartas, o a su regreso, pueda confirmarnos la satisfaccion que expresa en su apreciable carta citada.

Correspondo cumplidamente a sus afectuosos saludos y le reitero la expresion sincera de nuestra amistad, su amigo:

Alfonso Rafael

BUSINESS LETTER

Nueva York, 9 de enero de 1975

Sr. Presidente de la Compania
Avenida de la Americas
Nueva York

Distinguido Señor:

He recibido la convocatoria para la reunion que se celebrara el dia 19 de los corrientes y siento manifestarle que no me sera posible acudir a la misma porque me veo precisado a cumplir compromisos familiares contraidos con anterioridad a la convocatoria.

Me complace en dar mi conformidad a los acuerdos que de la reunion resulten.

Le saluda atentamente su amigo, s. s. y consocio:

Carlos Skinner

LUGAR Y FECHA

Culiacan, Sin., a 8 de Julio de 1970

Ref.: No. 1015.-

NOMBRE Y DIRECCION

Custom Planters Seed Company
P. O. Box 1407
Little Rock, AR 72200

MARGEN DE RESPETO

SALUDO

Muy señores nuestros:

TEXTO (EXPONE)

Adjunto a la presente nos permitimos remitir a ustedes Cheque de Caja No. 18640, expedido por el Banco de Sinaloa, S. A. a su favor, por la cantidad de:-----\$35,610.12 DLS. (TREINTA Y CINCO MIL SEISCIENTOS DIEZ DLS. -----12/100 U. S. Cy.), importe que cubre el saldo a nuestro cargo por las remesas que nos hicieron de Semilla--de Frijol Soya de las variedades Bragg, Hood, Lee y Davis.

SUPLICA

Esperando que lo anterior sea de su completa conformidad, quedamos en espera de su acuse de recibo.

DESPEDIDA

Sin más de momento nos repetimos como siempre Attos. y Ss. Ss.

ASOCIACION DE AGRICULTORES DEL RIO CULIACAN
DEPARTAMENTO DE CONTABILIDAD

FIRMA

WILFREDO LORENZO
Contador

WLL'aev.

Anexo: Cheque de caja No. 18640.-

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

CARTA DE PRESENTACION

Abril 15 de 1979

Sr. Gerente del Banco Comercial
Calle de Tehuantepec
Guadalajara, Gto.

Muy estimado amigo:

Tengo mucho placer de presentar, a usted a mi amiga la señorita María Gonzales y Londres.

Esta mujer permanecerá en su ciudad durante todo este año y me haría personalmente un favor especial si le da le ayuda que pueda rendirle durante su estancia.

Agradeciéndole por anticipado todas las atenciones que usted tenga con la señorita Gonzales, me suscribo de Vd. Afmo. Atto. y S. S.

Juan Ramon Celayo

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Discuss the main differences between the Spanish commercial correspondence and that of the United States.
2. What does a Spanish letter consist of? (Goal for an oral report using visuals.)
3. Describe the different methods of writing the date? How is it becoming Americanized? Does this detract or add to the letter?
4. Write letters to: 1) a business 2) a friend 3) the Pope using the different appropriate openings and closings.
5. Write a letter of introduction.

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